

T.H. Bridges TERRE HAUTE, STAR 2/20/67

THE TERRE

## Parke Countians Help Bridge Vigo County's Financial Gap

By FRANCES E. HUGHES  
Star Staff Writer

Since an article appeared in The Star on Feb. 10 about damage to Irishman's bridge, said to be the oldest covered bridge in the state, by vandals or careless motorists, \$105 has been donated to the fund for eventual removal of the bridge for its preservation.

George E. Borum, director of the Parke County Covered Bridge Museum, Rockville, sent a check for \$100 this week to the Vigo County Commissioners. Ward C. Hargis also donated \$5 to the fund.

+ + +

Added to the \$12.26 given by the fourth grade school children of Pimento School and the \$6.50 donated by the Girl Scouts of Maryland School, this makes a total of \$123.75 toward the \$6,000 needed.

When the total is realized, the plans are for the bridge to be moved to Fowler Park to become an historical monument to the old covered bridges of the county by the Vigo County Commissioners, according to Harry Brentlinger Jr., president.

When the bridge is moved, the Vigo County Highway Department will build a new bridge over Honey Creek at the site of the bridge on Ferree Road (or County Road 24-S as it is called now).

George E. Borum, who donated the \$100, is a book dealer at Centralia, Ill. His business frequently takes him across this part of Indiana and a few years ago he stopped in the Tourist Information Center in Rockville and asked about the Parke County covered bridges.

+ + +

This casual interest developed into zealous enthusiasm. He studied the subject exhaustively, and started making scale models

and collecting a wide variety of related memorabilia and artifacts of the bridges.

Then, he began dreaming about a museum where covered bridge enthusiasts could see all these things and get factual information. Several locations were considered but Parke County seemed the most logical.

Last fall, he bought a building on the west side of the public square in Rockville, and has spent every spare hour this winter in preparation for his Parke County Covered Bridge Museum.

He and his wife, Linda, are both flyers (they own a plane) and some of Borum's working days have literally been "flying trips."

+ + +

This is thought to be the only covered bridge museum in the world. It is suitably housed within a bridge, and the bridge is in a building. The bridge is 60 by 12 feet in size. Besides his wife, many other Parke County residents have helped in the planning and building of the covered bridge and its contents.

Borum is a member of most of the covered bridge societies in the United States, and is a firm believer in preserving as many of these heritages as possible. Being practical, he knows they are only saved by people willing to contribute financially as moving a bridge involves a lot more than sentiment.

Hence, his contribution to the preservation of Irishman's Bridge.

INDIANA ROOM

PAMPALLO TALL

# Pimento Students Kick-Off Fund for Moving Bridge

Oct. 13 '68

p. 20

By JACK A. HUGHES

Tribune Staff Writer

The first contribution officially recorded for moving Irishman's Bridge to safety has been received by the Vigo Board of County Commissioners from fourth graders in Pimento Elementary School.

Harry P. Brentlinger, president of the board, reports that a letter over the typewritten signature, Fourth Grade Teachers, advised of the interest on the part of the pupils and enclosed a money order for \$13.65.

The only covered bridge remaining in Vigo County, Irishman's Bridge, is reputed to be the oldest one in the state. The 1845 construction date attributed to Irishman's Bridge predates even those in Parke County, "the covered bridge capital of the world."

Located about three miles west of Riley in Honey Creek Township, the old structure spans the creek for which the township was named on the Ferree Rd. (County Road No. 24-S) approximately two miles southeast of the Mt. Pleasant Church.

## Move Supported

Members of the Vigo County Historical Society, originally opposed to moving the county's only covered bridge from its site of 123 years, now support a plan to move the structure

with an aim toward preserving it from vandalism.

The bridge, maintained by the county commissioners and highway department in the regular maintenance of roads and bridges, has been the subject of extensive repairs several times in recent years. But, the years have not been as hard on the structure as has been wanton vandalism, according to the commissioners. For no apparent reason, other than idle destructive intent, whole boards have been ripped from the sides and some parts have had to be replaced after they were riddled with gunshots.

County Commissioner Harry P. Brentlinger, after a recent expensive restoration, suggested that Irishman's Bridge could best be preserved, and continue to serve useful purpose, in a move to the new county park, Fowler Park, located about six miles south of Terre Haute near U.S. Highway 41. There, Irishman's Bridge would be a part of the park road system over one of the creeks leading from the park lake.

And, officials and historians hope, this part of Vigo history will be safer from vandalism in the park than in its present location.

## \$6,000 Moving Cost

But the move will cost an estimated \$6,000 and there are no funds available either in the highway, bridge or park budgets, according to the commis-

sioners. The interested parties were considering the possibility of public subscription to finance the project when the Pimento fourth graders started it.

The bridge got its name from a Frenchman who settled near the site. Historical Society records indicate that careless pronunciation of the last name of Adolphus Erisman, who owned property to one side of the bridge, resulted in the name, Irishman's Bridge.

The original structure, 18 feet wide and 80 feet long, was built of poplar wood sides and an oak plank floor with hand-hewn stone piers which since have been reinforced with concrete. It was re-built in 1851 after extensive damage from a flood. Technical descriptions report that its construction is "a modified Howe pony truss version of a burr with queenposts."

A number of stories have been recorded in the history of Irishman's Bridge. One dramatic episode reports that while the bridge was still under construction, a pioneer family traveling in a covered wagon was caught in a storm near the structure. They took refuge in the bridge which had a floor and a roof and partially completed sides, tacking carpeting over one end to keep out wind and rain. That night, a baby was born to the family and, when the storm was over, one more person left the bridge than had entered it.

Now, almost a century and a

quarter later, the Historical Society, officials and other interested people, including Pimento School's fourth graders, seek to preserve this bit of Vigo County history.

A large picture of Irishman's Bridge is one of many exhibits in the Historical Society Museum at 1411 S. 6th St.



(Vigo Co)

F.H. Bridges  
T.H. Trib-Star 10/13/68

# Dedication of Wabash Bridge Festive Affair

By DOROTHY CLARK

On Tuesday, October 17, 1905, The Tribune Gazette, which boasted on its masthead that it was "read each evening by 72 per cent of the people of Terre Haute," carried the front-page story of the dedication of the new Wabash Avenue bridge.

"The new \$271,000 bridge across the Wabash river was formally dedicated this afternoon. Prior to the exercises on a platform in the center of the bridge, there was a parade of the police, fire department and other bodies.

"The West Terre Haute band furnished music for the occasion, it being deemed appropriate that a band from our growing sister town should be represented in the exercises.

"The program began about 2:30 o'clock, in the presence of a large crowd. County Recorder M. T. Goodman called the meeting to order and introduced William C. Ball, who acted as chairman, and made some brief remarks.

"Wallace Marshall, president of the Lafayette Engineering Company, then spoke, turn-



DOROTHY J. CLARK

ing over the bridge to the county. County Attorney Horace S. Pugh responded on behalf of the county commissioners and Claude G. Bowers responded, accepting the bridge on behalf of the people.

"In his address on behalf of the people, Mr. Bowers said: 'In the construction of this bridge the people of Vigo County have paid tribute to themselves and given ample evidence that the county is not peopled by a parsimonious population. And why should we be parsimonious? With what generous bounty has nature endowed this territory? The smile of omnipotence has

fertilized the soil. Would you feast your eye and gladden your heart by looking upon a scene of pastoral beauty and prosperity? Then go out into the county and see the corn fields burdened with the ripened ear, the yellow fields from which the wheat was gleaned and gathered to the granary, the great meadow lands that were but yesterday thickly jewelled by the red and white of the fragrant clover; the pastures in which the pensive, patient cattle graze.

"And as you traverse the country side you will see at frequent intervals the derricks of the mines and know that down beneath the fertile soil is sleeping undisturbed, as yet, by pick or dynamite, sufficient coal to feed the furnaces of the future.

"And our industrial life. Go into the city and see the glow of the furnaces and hear the ring of the anvils and the whirr of the wheels. Go out upon our streets and note the evidence of commercial activity and in the crowds that hourly pour from interurban cars read the reason for our commercial prosperity.

"With fertile fields and mines untapped, with factories, distilleries, banks and stores — with plants from which the crude clay pours to a completion in crocks and jars — in every sight that greets the eye we see elements of material wealth compared to which the fabled palace of Aladdin grows dim and dies. Out of the fields and the factories, out of the mines and the clay plants, out of the banks and the earnings of the brokers we have taken a pinch of the profits and have invested it in a bridge that will add to the pleasure and the profits of the entire community. If we have built an expensive bridge, we live in an opulent community. And we have not builded for ourselves alone—we have builded for the future and future generations will rise up and call us blessed because we have built so wisely and so well."

## Street Carnival Opens

On the day before the dedication of the new bridge, the street carnival opened in Terre Haute for a week of activities. A very large crowd was present to see the horse "speedy" take his high dive into a vat of water from the platform erected near the courthouse and the intersection of Second and Main streets.

The fall of Port Arthur was the big attraction on the river Tuesday night. The fleet of boats met south of the new bridge to be viewed by the judges and awarded prizes. The judges were Capt. Shewmaker, Capt. Hammerstien and Capt. Higgins. At 8 o'clock the fleet steamed up the river and attacked the fort on the island between the two bridges. The fort was defended by the largest boat on the river, the "Vesuvius," which was anchored near the fort, and manned by members of Company B who charged the heights after the battle.

Big doings in Terre Haute 63 years ago when our bridge was new!

PAMPHLET FILE

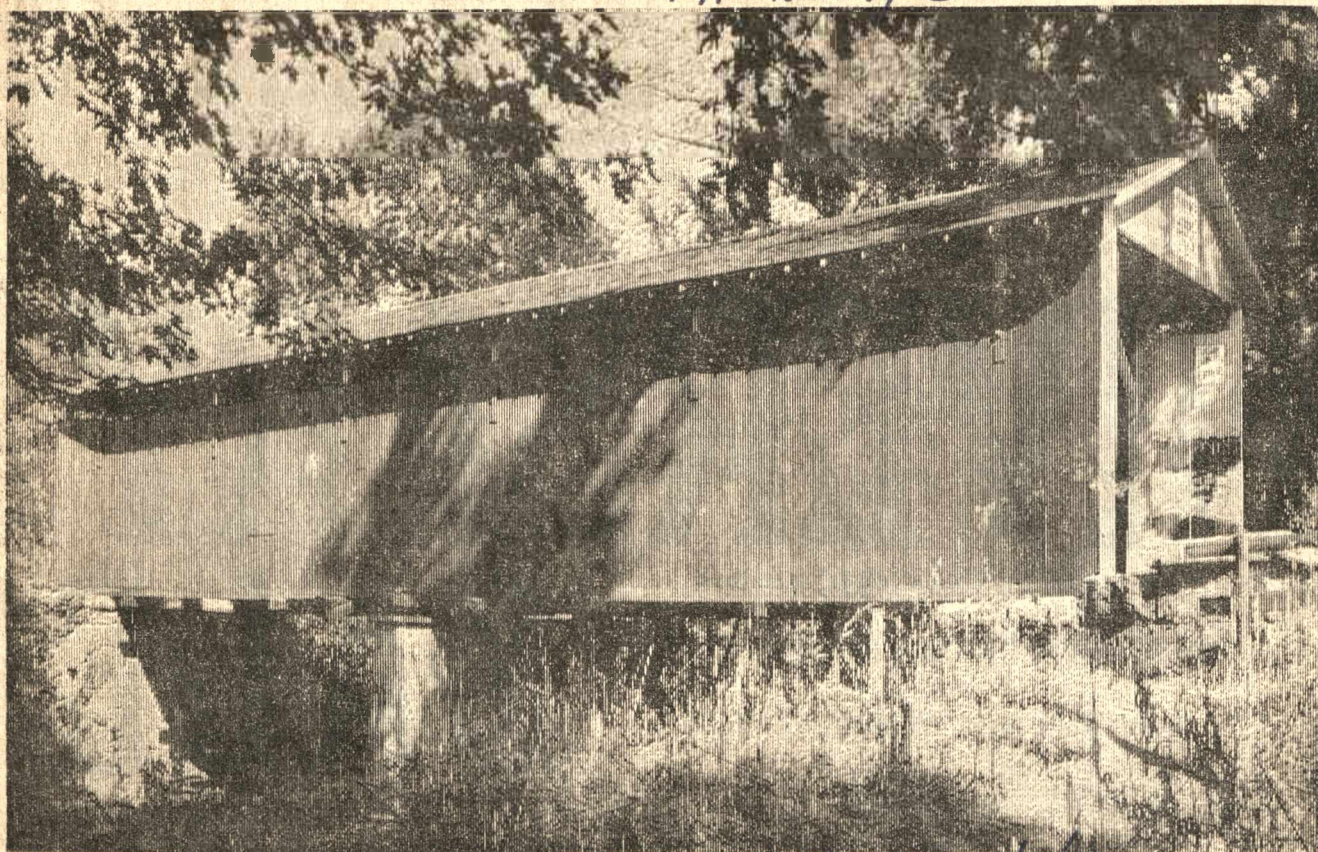
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T. H. Bridges

T.H. Bridges



IRISHMAN'S BRIDGE, the only covered bridge in Vigo County, and probably the oldest structure of its kind in the state, may be moved from its location over Honey Creek on the Ferree Rd., about three miles west of Riley, to Fowler Park. The proposal by the Vigo Board of County Commissioners joins the aim of the Vigo Historical Society to preserve the structure and economy of bridge maintenance, hit in recent years by expensive repairs resulting from vandalism.



THESE PIMENTO FOURTH GRADERS put their money where their hearts were initiating a public subscription to move and preserve Irishman's Bridge. With their teacher's help, they sent a money order for \$13.65 to the Vigo Board of County Commissioners to begin a fund for moving the 1845 covered bridge to Fowler Park, the first Vigo County park, located about six miles south of Terre Haute near U. S. Highway 41. Their teachers are Mrs. Joy Harlan, Mrs. Judy Payne, Mrs. Dorothy Proksa and student teacher Miss Kathey Sabkowicz.

(over)



# TERRE HAUTE Bridges

THE BRIDGES (Vigo Co)  
T.H. STAR 6-28-70



**SAVE THE BRIDGE**—Members of the Vigo County Retired Teachers presented \$50 to the Covered Bridge Fund recently. Shown during the presentation are, from left: Miss Adelaide Devaney, member of the Civic Committee of the Vigo County Retired Teachers; Mrs. Dorothy Jerse, treasurer of the Covered Bridge Fund; Miss Blanche Richardson, president of the Retired Teachers organization, and Miss Gertrude F. Soules, first president of the Retired Teachers.

Photo by Martin.

INDIANA ROOM

## Irishman's Bridge Fund Gifts Listed

The Save the Irishman's Bridge campaign received a \$50 donation from the Vigo County Retired Teachers Association this week.

Donations for the covered bridge fund may be sent to Mrs. Dorothy Jerse, treasurer of the fund, at 1001 Royce Ave., Terre Haute, Ind. 47802. Or to the Vigo County Historical Society, 1411 S. 6th St., Terre Haute, Ind., 47802.

Recent contributions include Mrs. Lilla Richmond, \$25.00; Mrs. William Hopp, \$1.00; Mrs. John Moore, \$1.00; Mrs. Jerome Martin, \$10.00; Dr. Wayne A. Crockett, \$5.00; Frank Wm. Jerse, \$5.00; American Gold Star Mothers, \$5.00; Kathleen R. Klega, \$7.00 and Labors International Union, Local No. 204, \$5.00.

W. E. Isaacs, \$5.00; Nilson Engineering Co., \$10.00; Bernard J. Ridens, \$5.00; Riley School PTA, \$25.00; Bruce Kasameyer, \$10.00; Riley Grill, \$3.05; Riley Frozen Food Locker,

\$1.39; Hylton's Clip and Curl, \$4.22; Riley J & F Market, \$1.63 and Kay's Beauty Shop, \$1.30.

Rea Park Golf Course, \$1.98; Riley School Students, \$22.00; Riley Cub Scouts, Den. No. \$10.00; Brownie Scout Troop No. 61, \$10.00; Riley Lions Club, \$25.00; Maryland Beauty Shop, \$1.00; Mrs. Ann Demke, \$1.00.

PAMPHLET FILE

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# State Action Delays Work On Margaret Ave. Bridge

By MIKE RUSSELL

Tribune Staff Writer

The sign on the bridge on Margaret Ave., just east of 25th St. says: Load limit—5 tons. City Engineer John Byrne reports the limit as being two tons, but just looking at the bridge makes one wonder if it might even be less.

The bridge is basically a wooden structure, with steel support members. The bed of the bridge is also made of wood, although attempts in the past to cover it with asphalt have been made. The condition of the bridge is such that now, when a car passes over the bridge, passengers in the car bounce from one side of the vehicle to the other, unless the driver proceeds at less than ten miles per hour.

Action by the city to replace the bridge has been taken but is being held up by the State of Indiana. The city has proposed a new overpass with two culverts, with an area of 90 square feet for water passage. Total cost for the city plan would have been about \$7,000.

Byrne also planned for the road to be widened, as presently it is wide enough for just one car at a time to pass over the bridge. His new plans call for

the road to be widened to 34 feet, with two 12 foot lanes of traffic and two five-foot shoulders.

The state's objection to the city plan centers around possible flooding of Thompson's Ditch, which is the reason for the bridge. The state maintains that two culverts of this size would not be enough to handle the high waters which follow heavy rains.

The state wants three times as much area for water passage, at about three times the cost.

Plans were first made by the city in December of 1968, when the city council considered replacing or replacing the existing structure. Byrne was called upon by the council to draw up plans that would do the most good for the least amount of money.

On May 13 of this year, the plans were submitted to the state for their approval, but when the reply came from the state on June 23, it was negative.

Mayor Leland Larrison and the city council have the authority to build the bridge without state approval, but then could be sued by local residents who suffered flood damage should the case arise.

The city could, of course, com-

ply with the state specifications and build a more expensive bridge but this would mean greater expense to the taxpayer.

Action by the city should come in the near future, as the State Flood Control Board is presently reconsidering the city plans. When their decision is known, Mayor Larrison will have to decide his own course of action.

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INDIANA ROOM

Vigo County Public Library



5-10-70

# Girl Scouts, Historical Society Join Hands to Save Irishman's Bridge

By DOROTHY M. CLARK

At the Mt. Pleasant church corner on the old Riley Road, turn south on county road 24S for approximately 1½ miles, then turn east on county road 18E and follow a winding black-top and gravel road about two miles to the covered bridge over Honey Creek. This is Irishman's Bridge, the last and only covered bridge left standing in Vigo County.

Notice the original hewn stone piers, reinforced in the middle with concrete piers. The bridge is 18 feet wide and 80 feet long. Poplar boards cover the sides while the floor is of oak planks.

It has been said that in all the category of sound, there's no melody quite so nostalgic as the clippity-clop of horse's hooves echoing through the cool darkness of a covered bridge. How fortunate are those who can recall this sound. Those of us whose memories begin after

"horse and buggy days" can only imagine it.

Many of our early roads here in the Midwest followed the banks of rivers and streams, and wherever the road had to cross a stream, there was a likely spot for a covered bridge. By 1830 the first covered bridges were being erected in the Midwest.

For many years the question was raised to WHY covered bridges were covered. Was it for economy or to make the horse happy? This proved to be as much of a riddle as—"which came first, the chicken or the egg?" Was it to fool the horse into thinking he was entering a stable instead of crossing a body of water?

The primary reason for the bridge being covered was to strengthen the structure, and at the same time to allow interior wood to season. As some people mistakenly believed, it was not to keep horses from shying at the water or to make it easier to drive cattle across; it was to protect the bridge from wind and weather. The roof was said to have added twenty to forty years to the life of the bridge when the timbers were protected from rotting in the sun and rain.

The dark interiors offered an excuse for "spooning" and

hand - holding by courting couples. The exteriors offered an excellent place for outdoor advertising. All sorts of hand-bills, posters and political announcements were tacked on the bridge sides.

By 1870 iron bridges were being constructed. Then came the automobile age which sounded the death knell of the covered bridges. Trucks and covered bridges were never designed to go together, and they began to steadily disappear. By 1950 there were only 184 covered bridges left in Indiana. Vigo County has only one left!

Irishman's Bridge, about three miles west of Riley, over Honey Creek, has an interesting history. Shortly before work was completed on this bridge, when the floor, the upper framework and roof had been finished, a long siege of rainy weather set in. After the weather cleared, the workmen returned from a nearby farm house, and much to their surprise, found a carpet hung at each end of the bridge and a family in a covered wagon camped there. The young mother had just given birth to a baby in the shelter of the new covered bridge while seeking protection from the bad weather.

The workmen gallantly left the little family in peace until they were able to move on before beginning their sawing and pounding to finish the bridge. Irishman's Bridge is very probably the only covered bridge in the world which served as a

nursery for a new-born baby!

Parke County to the north of Vigo County has the most covered bridges of any county in the United States, but Irishman's Bridge in Vigo County is older than any of those in Parke County. Irishman's Bridge was built in 1845!

Another interesting story about our bridge is how it got its name. It seems that Adolphus Erisman owned the land on one side of the bridge, and Hoosier dialect being what it is, Erisman soon turned into Irishman's!

Vigo County has already lost too many of its old landmarks and historical sites. Let's make it a point to keep this one safe for future generations. "Those who forget their past have no future."

Irishman's Bridge is classed by some experts as a "Modified Howe Truss." Others term it a pony-truss version of the Burr Truss with queenpost, to which new web members have been added in later years.

In recent years the Vigo County Commissioners and County Council have cooperated with the Vigo County Historical Society in trying to keep in good repair Irishman's Bridge, believed to be the oldest in Indiana. In spite of repeated attacks by vandals, the bridge has had a new roof, carpenter repair where necessary, and a fresh coat of "barn red" paint.

It was suggested that the historic bridge be moved to Fowler Park — a newly estab-

lished county park and recreation area — where it could be placed over water in a proper setting and be protected from further vandalism. This move would cost money the county budget could not provide, so interested citizens will be asked to donate to the Girl Scout Covered Bridge Council fund-raising drive to save the bridge.

PAMPHLET FILE

INDIANA ROOM

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**BRIDGE THAT NEEDS RESCUING**—The Irishman's Bridge, located on Ferree Road over Honey Creek, was built in 1845 and is Vigo County's only covered bridge. But weather and vandals are gradually destroying it. It is one of two Indiana covered bridges employing modified queen post truss construction.



**SAVING OUR HERITAGE**—All levels of Girl Scouts in the southern area of the Covered Bridge Council and the Vigo County Historical Society are trying to raise money to move and preserve the Irishman's Bridge, the only structure of its kind in the county. Displaying posters are: (from left) Linda Page, Junior Girl Scout; Nancy Allen, Senior Girl Scout; Sally Isles, Cadet; Tracy Dail, Brownie; Mrs. Dorothy J. Clark, honorary chairman of the Save Our Only Bridge committee, and Mrs. Ewing Miller, chairman of the committee.

**Strausburg Photo.**



7-12-70 Vigo Co. BRIDGES

T.N. TRIB-STAR

## Keeping Irishman's Bridge Intact Proves Real Problem

Vigo County Sheriff Clyde Lovellette discussed the problems of keeping Irishman's Bridge, Vigo County's only covered bridge, safe from vandalism at its present location on Old Riley Rd. Tuesday.

Examining the bridge with Lovellette Tuesday were: Wandell Gabey, Chairman Neighborhood L, District 7, Covered Bridge Council of Girl Scouts; Dot Payne, leader Jr. Troop No. 104; and Mary Johnson, leader of Jr. Troop No. 68 and the first Girl Scout leader to involve Girl Scouts in a covered bridge project.

The Covered Bridge Fund, a joint effort by local Girl Scouts and the Vigo County Historical Society, has been established to raise \$6,000 to have the bridge moved to a safer location in Fowler Park. The fund has grown to around \$2,300 through contributions.

On looking over the bridge, Lovellette said, "Every citizen should take pride in our oldest covered bridge in Indiana. The Sheriff's Dept. has done as much as it can to protect Irishman's Bridge and preserve our heritage. If anyone is caught defacing or vandalizing, they will be prosecuted to the fullest extent."

Latest contributions to the fund include:

The Pillsbury Co., \$10; Milton Levin, Corner Furniture Store, \$5; Gilbert S. Cluder, \$25; Dr. Alan C. Rankin, \$20; Albert W. Collier, \$25; Girl Scout Troop No. 145, \$6; Terre Haute Savings Bank, \$10; United Steel Workers, Local No. 7441, \$10; Paul Hannum, \$1; Mrs. Joseph Kish, \$1.

Piersonette's Home Ec Club,

\$5; Merry Mom's Home Demonstration Club, \$5; Rev. Mrs. Harold E. Taylor, \$5; Linton Township Home Ec Club, \$5; Great A & P Co., Ann Page Div., \$25; Florence E. Ennis, \$5.

All donations are deposited directly into the fund. All publicity and promotion costs have been donated by Girl Scouts and their leaders, by the local news media and by interested citizens of Vigo County.

Persons wishing to help move Irishman's Bridge to Fowler Park should send donations to Covered Bridge Fund, c-o Dorothy Jerse, 1001 Royce Ave., or to the Vigo County Historical Society, 1411 S. 6th St. All contributions are tax deductible.

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THE TRIBUNE

INDIANAPOLIS



# Vigo Co Bridges

T. H. TRIBUNE-STAR.

Sunday, July 12, 1970 3



**DOES IT PASS INSPECTION?**—Sheriff Clyde Lovellette inspects Irishman's Bridge, Vigo County's oldest and only covered bridge. In a joint effort by local Girl Scouts and the Vigo County Historical Society, funds are being raised to move the bridge from its location on Old Riley Rd. to Fowler Park. Looking the bridge over with the sheriff are (from left): Wandell Gabey, chairman, Neighborhood I, District 7, Covered Bridge Council of Girl Scouts; Dot Payne, leader of Junior Troop 104, and Mary Johnson, leader of Junior Troop 68.

Martin Photo.  
Martin Photo.



*THE BRIDGES*  
**Moving Day**  
**Nearer Reality**  
*STAR 8/17/71*  
**For Old Bridge**

A check for \$2,500 to complete the Irishman's Bridge Fund will be presented to the Vigo County Historical Society Wednesday by the Columbian Enameling & Stamping Division of General Housewares Corp.

Presentation of the check, which will meet the \$6,000 total necessary to move the old covered bridge to Fowler Park, will be made at 10 a.m. at the bridge site on the Ferre Road at a point about five miles southeast of the Mt. Pleasant Church.

Built in 1845, the old bridge spans Honey Creek and is generally believed to be the oldest covered bridge in Indiana.

Pilings for the old bridge were set at Fowler Park recently, with work for the project donated by the Dennis Trucking Co. Sometime this fall the task of moving the bridge to its new site will be begun by moving engineer Elmer Buchta of Otwell, Ind.

Attainment of the \$6,000 goal completes an effort begun in 1967 when the Vigo County Historical Society asked Vigo County officials to protect the landmark bridge from deteriorating elements and vandals. The fund was begun shortly thereafter.

Meanwhile, Haley Bros. Construction Co. received a contract Monday for the installation of a replacement bridge for the covered structure. Haley Bros. was the sole bidder for the work with a bid price of \$6,490.

The new bridge will be a structural plate arch, with work expected to begin in the near future.





**BRIDGE IS DEDICATED**—Representatives of Vigo County government, the historical society, private industry and the Covered Bridge Council of Girl Scouts dedicated Irishman's Bridge, Sunday, at its new location in Fowler Park. On hand for the ceremony were, from left, Lory Miller, John Spitler, vice president, Columbian Enameling & Stamping Co.; Ralph Courtney, president, Vigo Historical Society; Harry P. Brentlinger, Vigo County Board of Commissioners; John Etling, Wabash Valley Central Labor Council, and Don Meyer, county council.

# Old Irishman's Bridge

## Dedicated at Fowler Park

NOV 20 1971

NOV 29 1971

Bridges (I.H.)

Irishman's Bridge, which once protected weary travelers, withstood raging flood waters, and gave shelter to a pioneer family as a child was born, was formally dedicated Sunday in its relocated home in Fowler Park.

Believed to be the oldest covered bridge in Vigo County, Irishman's Bridge was moved to the new location after it stood 126 years on Ferce Road spanning a branch of Honey Creek in the southeastern part of the county.

A campaign to raise funds to move the bridge began in 1967 after numerous acts of vandalism and deteriorating elements caused alarm among county historians. Among those concerned over the bridge's future were the board of directors of the Covered Bridge Girl Scout Council, Vigo County Historical Society, and chairman Mrs. Dorothy Jerse.

With the spring of 1970 local historians found one of the major stumbling blocks for relocation removed. The Vigo County Department of Park and Recreation came to their rescue offering a site in Fowler Park for the historical covered bridge.

Money trickled in from numerous sources during the next year but the campaign was far from its \$6,000 goal when Columbian Enameling and Stamping Co. in August presented a gift of \$2,500 to bring the drive over the top. The donation was made as part of the company's 100th anniversary observance.

Several county officials joined representatives of the Historical Society and Girl Scout

Council in dedicating the bridge at its new location at the County's only park, where the bridge now spans a finger lake.

Other local firms which contributed substantially to the project were Dennis Trucking Co., Public Service Indiana and Ewing Miller Partnership.

Built in 1845, Irishman's Bridge is Vigo County's only remaining covered bridge and is believed to be the oldest such structure in Indiana.

The bridge underwent repairs in 1851 after it was damaged by flood waters. It has been

painted and maintained during succeeding decades, but remains largely unchanged since its construction 126 years ago.

Measuring some 18 feet wide and 80 feet long, the bridge is constructed of durable poplar sideboards and heavy oak planks for the floor.

Among the unique aspects of the history of Irishman's Bridge is the claim it is the only bridge in the world on which a baby was born.

According to historical ac-

Continued On Page 2, Col. 5.

## Irishman's

Continued From Page One.

counts, a pioneer family moving west sought shelter on the bridge during a thunderstorm. Although the structure was not yet completed, the family nailed pieces of carpet to the sides of the bridge to keep out the wind and rain. While the family waited for the storm to subside, a baby was born.

History records when the work crews returned to finish the bridge, they obligingly waited until the family was able to move on.

Columbian's gift of \$2,500 to the Irishman's Bridge Fund capped an effort of nearly three years to raise the \$6,000 necessary for the project. The first donation came in October 1969 when fourth grade pupils at Pimento Elementary School contributed \$13.65 to the effort.

Community Affairs File

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA



T.H. Bridges

TRIB-STAR 8/29/71

IRISHMAN'S BRIDGE - FOWLER PARK



**IRISHMAN'S BRIDGE ON ITS WAY**—Irishman's Bridge, one of the oldest covered bridges in the state and the only one left in Vigo County, is raised on supports in preparation for the move to Fowler Park. Sheriff's deputies are guarding the historical bridge until Monday morning when the Junior Historical Society's dream of saving Irishman's Bridge is finally realized.

Photo by Bruce.

VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Community Affairs File

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Vigo County Public Library

Bridge

# CESCO Gives \$2,500 to Irishman's Bridge

Trib - Star

8/19/71

Officials of the Columbian Enameling and Stamping Co., 1536 Beech St., Wednesday presented a check in the amount of \$2,500 to be used to relocate the Irishman Bridge.

Mrs. Dorothy Clark, curator of the Vigo County Historical Museum, said the bridge, which is thought to be the oldest in Indiana, will be moved shortly from its present location to Fowler Park.

The bridge in recent years has been the target of several acts of vandalism. It is located on the Feree Road which spans Honey Creek southeast of the city.

The campaign to move the bridge was begun in 1967 by the Vigo County Historical Society and the Covered Bridge Girl Scout Council, with Mrs. Dorothy Jerse serving as chairman. The fund drive began to pick up speed in the Spring of 1970 when the Vigo County Park and Recreation Department offered a site in Fowler Park for the bridge's relocation.

Funds have trickled in from numerous sources during the last several months but the drive was a long way from its

\$6,000 goal. Columbian, a division of General Housewares Corp., made the presentation in conjunction with the 100th anniversary of its founding that will be observed Oct. 16.

Columbian originally was the Bellaire Stamping Co., of Bellaire, Ohio, where it opened in Oct. 16, 1871. After a bad fire, the company moved to Harvey, Ill., and was burned out again in 1900. The company reorganized and began manufacturing its blue enamel cookware here in 1902.

On hand for the check presentation Wednesday were Mrs. Jerse, John Spiller, vice president in charge of manufacturing; Richard Weddle, advertising manager; Robert Schull, marketing director; Ann Savage Blackmer, director of public relations for General Housewares, and Mrs. Clark.

Reportedly, the Vigo County Commissioners will close Feree Road in the vicinity of the old bridge Wednesday, Aug. 25.

Moving engineer Elmer Buchta of Otwell, Ind., who will be in charge of moving the bridge to Fowler Park, will begin the task shortly thereafter. There

is a possibility the work may begin late next week.

Equipment donated by the Dennis Trucking Co. recently completed preparation of footings for the bridge at its new site in Fowler Park.

The bridge will be moved to the park via back roads in the area, with the tedious process expected to take most of one day to complete. The Buchta firm has completed other such projects, many of them in nearby Parke County.

Built in 1845, Irishman's Bridge is Vigo County's only remaining covered bridge and reportedly is the oldest such structure in Indiana.

The Vigo County Historical Society in 1967 asked county authorities to protect the landmark bridge from deteriorating elements and vandals. The following year the county commissioners proposed the bridge be moved to the park for preservation.

The bridge underwent repairs in 1851 after it was damaged by flood waters and it has been painted and kept up during succeeding decades. Largely, how-

ever, the structure is unchanged during its 126 years. School contributed \$13.65 to the effort.

Some 18 feet wide and 30 feet long, the structure has durable poplar boards on its sides and heavy oak planks for a floor.

One of the most unique aspects of the history of Irishman's Bridge is a claim it is the only bridge in the world on which a baby was born.

According to historical accounts, a pioneer family moving westward sought shelter on the bridge during a storm. Although the structure was not yet completed, the family kept out the elements by nailing pieces of carpet on the sides of the bridge. While the family waited for the storm to subside, a baby was born.

History records that when the work crews returned to finish the bridge, they obligingly waited until the family was able to move on.

Wednesday's \$2,500 gift to the Irishman's Bridge Fund caps an effort of nearly three years to raise the \$6,000 necessary for the project. The first donation came in October of 1969 when fourth grade pupils at the Pimento Elementary

Special Collections

CONT. ON THE BACK



TERRE HAUTE TRIB.

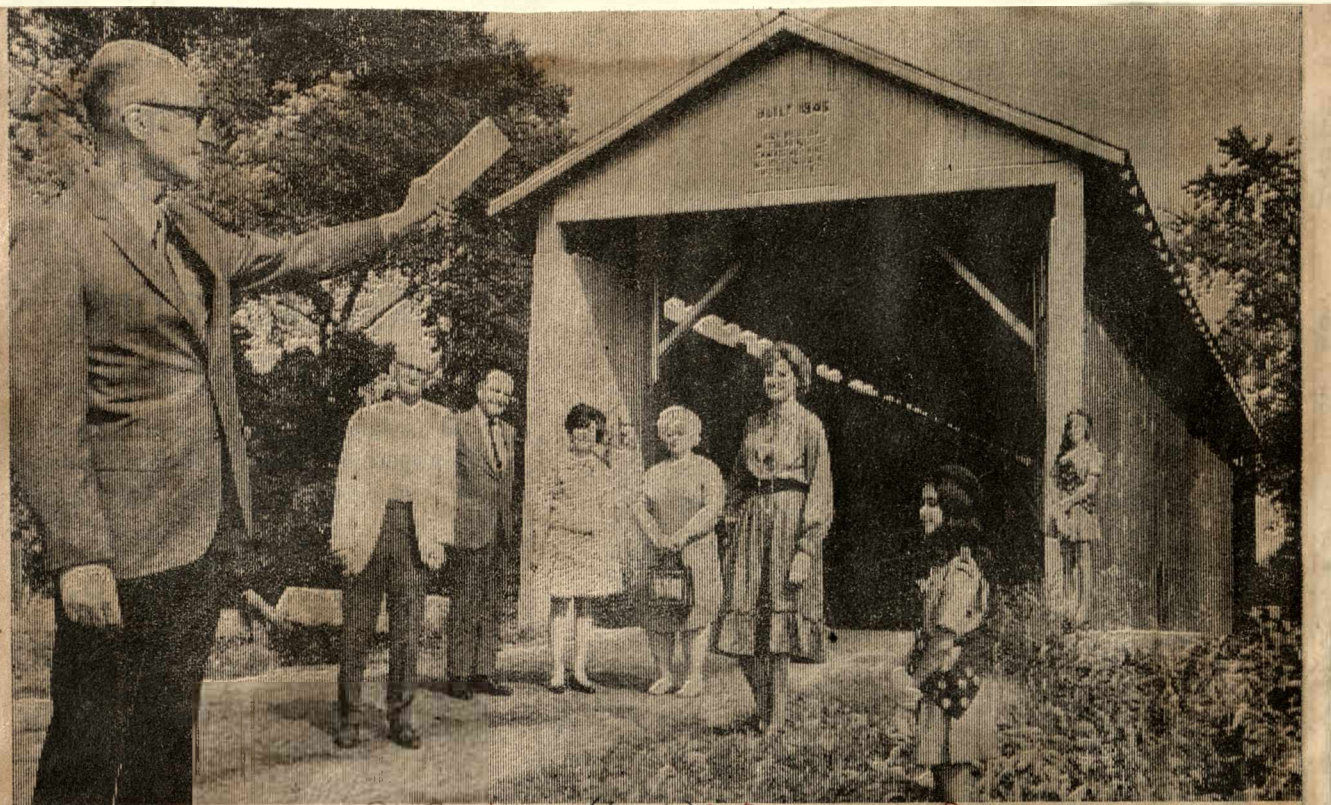
22 THE TRIBUNE, TERRE HAUTE, IND.

THURSDAY, AUG. 19, 1971



IRISHMAN'S BRIDGE will be on more permanent grounds in the near future through the generosity of Columbian Enameling and Stamping Company. A check for \$2,500 has been given to the Vigo County Historical Society and the Covered Bridge Girl Scout Council to help move it to Fowler Park. From left, are: Richard Weddle, Columbian advertising manager; Robert Shull, marketing director; John Spidler, vice president, manufacturing; Ann Savage Blackmer, General Housewares Corp. representative; Dorothy J. Clark, Historical Society; Dorothy Jerse, Tammy Chaney and Eli Safayan, representing the Girl Scouts. Martin Photo.





*to the Bridges (Vigo Co) 8/19/71 Star*

**OVER THE TOP**—John Spitler, vice president in charge of manufacturing of Columbia Enameling and Stamp Co., presented the Vigo County Historical Society and Covered Bridge Girl Scout Council with a check for \$2,500 to complete the fund drive to have historic Irishman's Bridge in southeastern Vigo County removed to a site in Fowler Park. Columbian made the donation in conjunction with the observance of the 100th anniversary of the company's founding. Also shown at

the presentation ceremony are, left to right, Richard Weddle, Columbian advertising manager; Robert Schull, marketing director; Ann Savage Blackmer, director of public relations for General Housewares Corp., parent organization of the local stamping mill; Mrs. Dorothy Clark, member of the Historical Society's Board of Directors; Mrs. Dorothy Jerse, who led the fund drive, and Girl Scouts Tammy Chaney and Eli Safayan. (Photo by Kadel)

The culmination of a four-year effort to raise funds for the removal of Irishman's Bridge to a safer and permanent location was realized Wednesday as officials of Columbian Enameling and Stamping Co. presented a check for \$2,500 to bring the campaign over the top.

The covered bridge, reputed to be the oldest in Indiana, has been the target of numerous acts of vandalism during the last several years at its present site on Feree Road where it spans Honey Creek southeast of Terre Haute.

The campaign to move the bridge was begun in 1967 by the Vigo County Historical Society and the Covered Bridge Girl Scout Council, with Mrs. Dorothy Jerse serving as chairman. The fund drive began to pick up speed in the Spring of 1970 when the Vigo County Park and Recreation Department offered a site in Fowler Park for the bridge's relocation.

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Funds have trickled in from numerous sources during the last several months but the drive was a long way from its \$6,000 goal. Columbian, a division of General Housewares Corp., made the presentation in conjunction with the 100th anniversary of its founding that will be observed Oct. 16.

Columbian originally was the

Bellaire Stamping Co., of Bellaire, Ohio, where it opened Oct. 16, 1871. After a bad fire, the company moved to Harvey, Ill., and was burned out again in 1900. The company reorganized and began manufacturing its blue enamel cookware here in 1902.

On hand for the check presentation Wednesday were Mrs. Jerse, John Spitler, vice president in charge of manufacturing; Richard Weddle, advertising manager; Robert Schull, marketing director; Ann Savage Blackmer, director of public relations for General Housewares, and Mrs. Dorothy Clark, curator of the Vigo County Historical Museum.

Reportedly, the Vigo County Commissioners will close Feree Road in the vicinity of the old bridge Wednesday, Aug. 25.

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Built in 1845, Irishman's Bridge is Vigo County's only remaining covered bridge and reportedly is the oldest such structure in Indiana.

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The bridge underwent repairs in 1851 after it was damaged by flood waters and it has been painted and kept up during succeeding decades. Largely, however, the structure is unchanged during its 126 years.

Some 18 feet wide and 80 feet long, the structure has durable poplar boards on its sides and heavy oak planks for a floor.

One of the most unique aspects of the history of Irishman's Bridge is a claim it is the only bridge in the world on which a baby was born.

According to historical accounts, a pioneer family moving westward sought shelter on the bridge during a storm. Although the structure was not yet completed, the family kept out the elements by nailing pieces of carpet on the sides of the bridge. While the family waited for the storm to subside, a baby was born.

History records that when the work crews returned to finish the bridge, they obligingly waited until the family was able to move on.

Wednesday's \$2,500 gift to the Irishman's Bridge Fund caps an effort of nearly three years to raise the \$6,000 necessary for the project. The first donation came in October of 1969 when fourth grade pupils at the Pimento Elementary School contributed \$13.65 to the effort.



THE TRIBUNE, TERRE HAUTE,  
INDIANA

## Dedication Of Irishman's Bridge Set

Irishman's Covered Bridge will be dedicated Nov. 28 during 2 p.m. ceremonies at Fowler Park.

A bronze plaque will be unveiled during the program. Its inscription reads: "Irishman's Bridge . . . Built 1845 . . . Moved 1971 from original location over Honey Creek on Ferree Road, Riley Twp., to Fowler Park, with funds raised by Girl Scouts, Vigo County Historical Society, area residents and employees of Columbian Enameling & Stamping Co. Last remaining covered bridge in Vigo County; only one in world on which a baby was born."

Taking part in the ceremony will be Ralph J. Courtney, president, Vigo County Historical Society; Harry J. Brentlinger, Vigo County Commissioner; Art Mann, president, Vigo County Council; Vigo County Park and Recreation Board; Girl Scout Covered Bridge Council and Columbian Enameling and Stamping Company.



# IRISHMAN'S BRIDGE IS MOVED

INDIANA ROOM

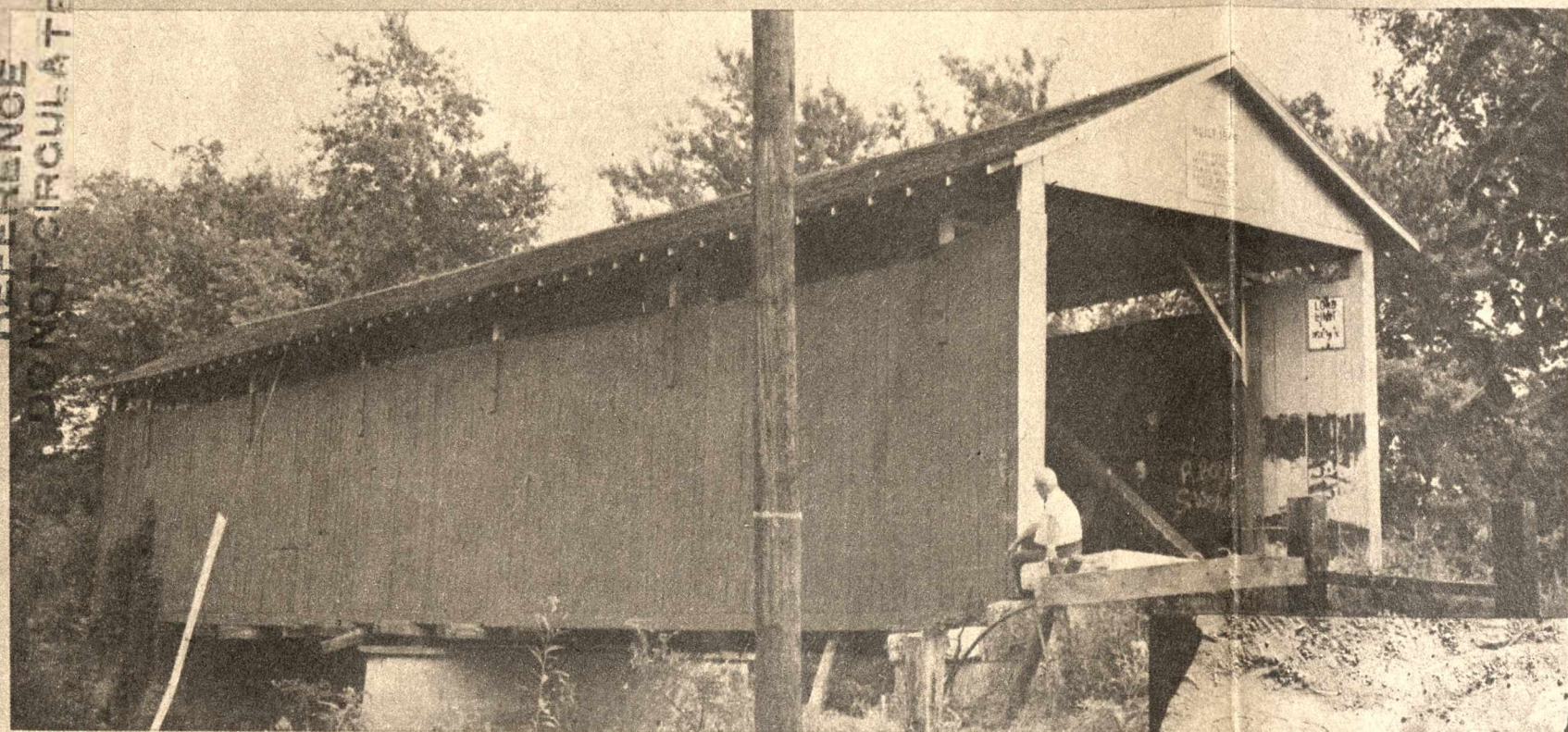
Terre Haute photographer Richard Bruce has captured on film the story of a covered bridge on the move.

As an officer of the Historical Society of Vigo County and with a particular interest in covered bridges, Bruce took his camera and a supply of film to a section of the Mt. Pleasant Road where it crosses a branch of Honey Creek.

At that point, Irishman's Bridge had stood since 1845. In an effort to protect it and preserve it as the county's only and possibly Indiana's oldest bridge, a citizen's group had raised money to move it to Fowler Park. Bruce stood by with his camera and filmed the project from beginning to end.

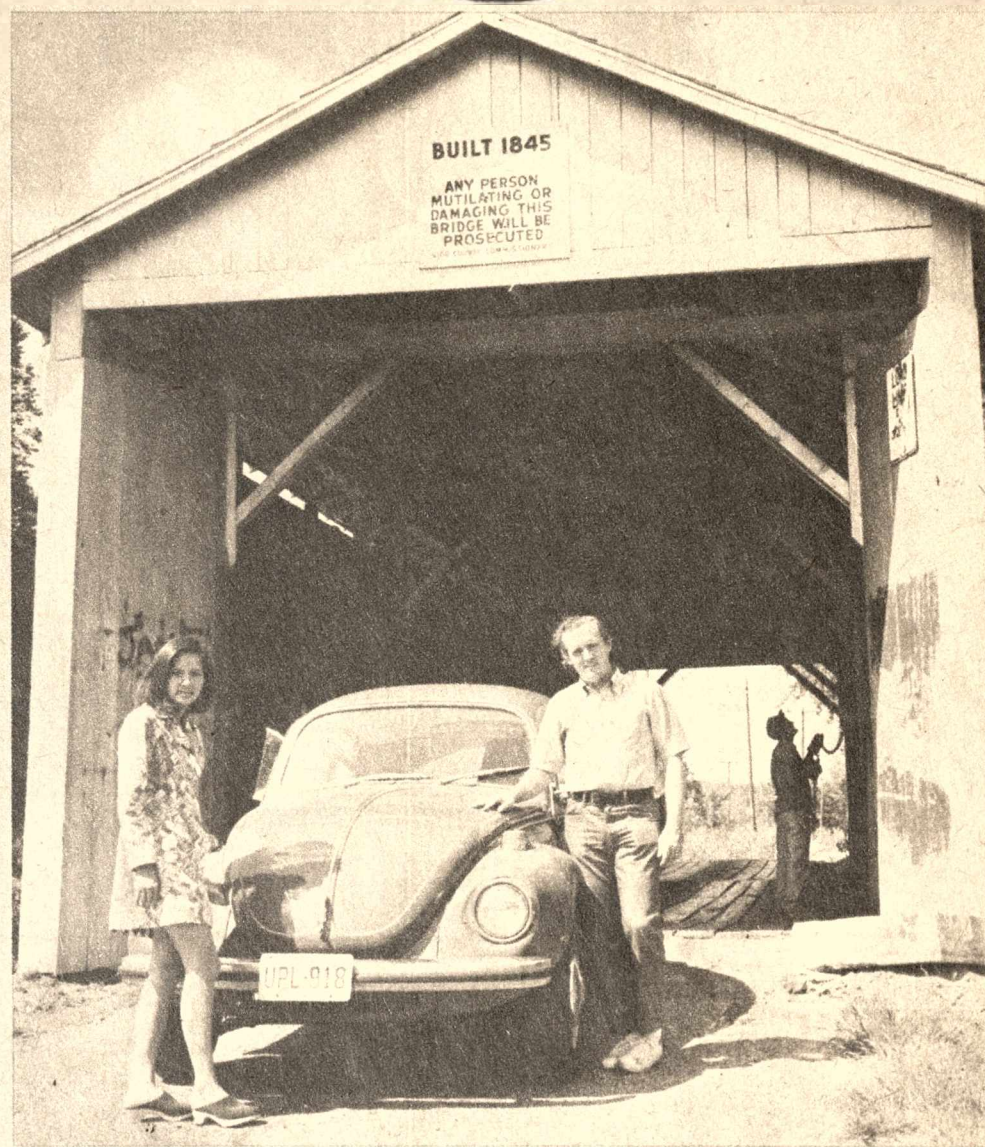
The bridge now stands amid a fall setting in Fowler Park. It could well be added to the list of "things to see" for persons visiting Rockville and following the winding bridge trails offered at the Parke County Covered Bridge Festival.

THE  
TERRE HAUTE  
TRIBUNE-STAR  
October 16, 1971  
TERRE HAUTE,  
INDIANA

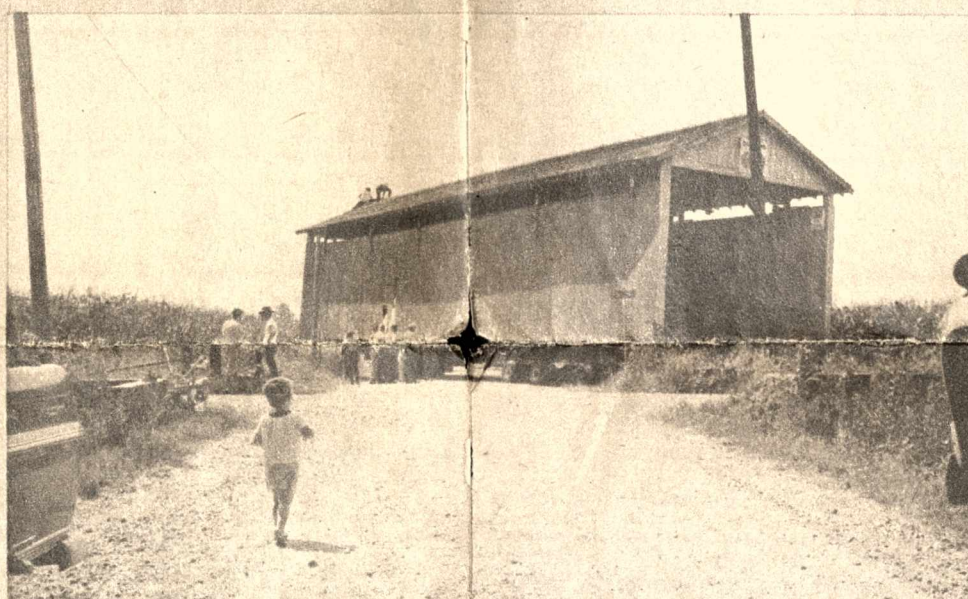
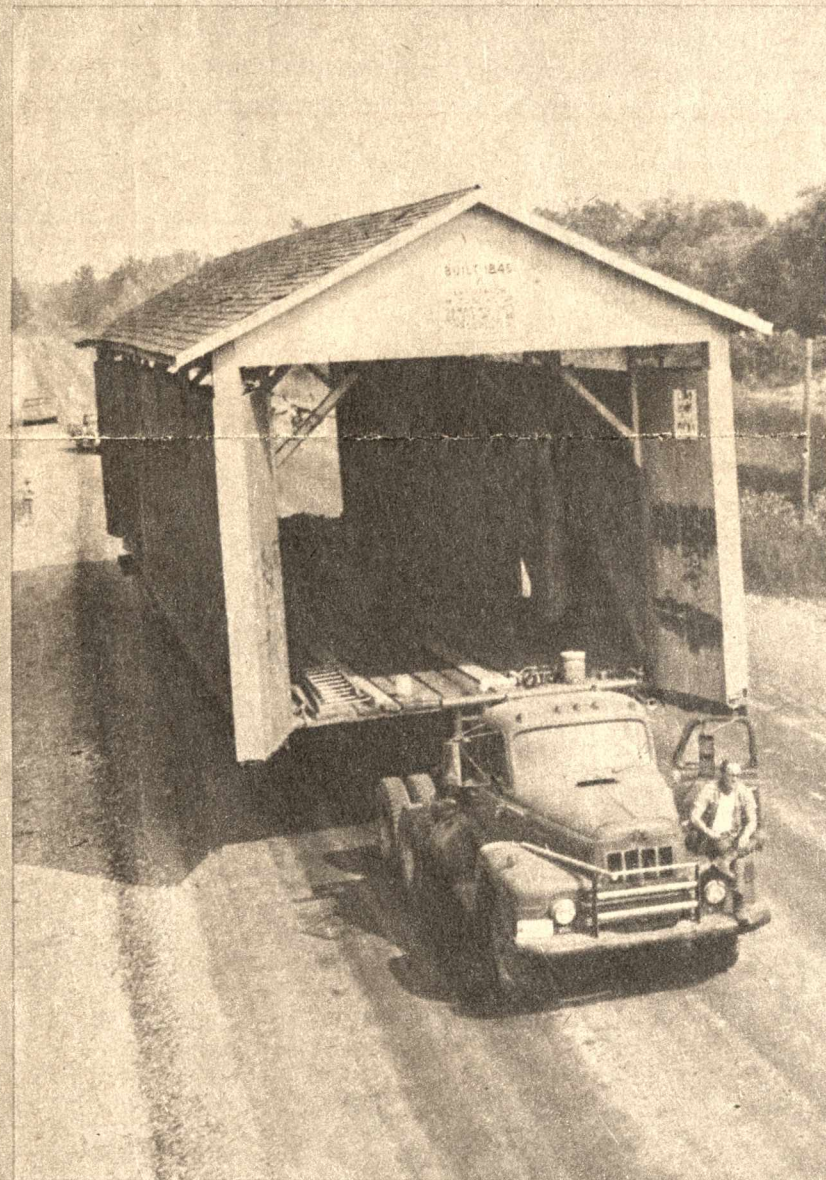


IRISHMAN'S BRIDGE stood on the Mt. Pleasant Road across a branch of Honey Creek for 126 years. It was moved to Fowler Park for preservation in natural surroundings as the only covered bridge in Vigo County.

AS THE BRIDGE was lifted from the roadway, the name, "Bob Hallston, 1938," was found > etched in the concrete.



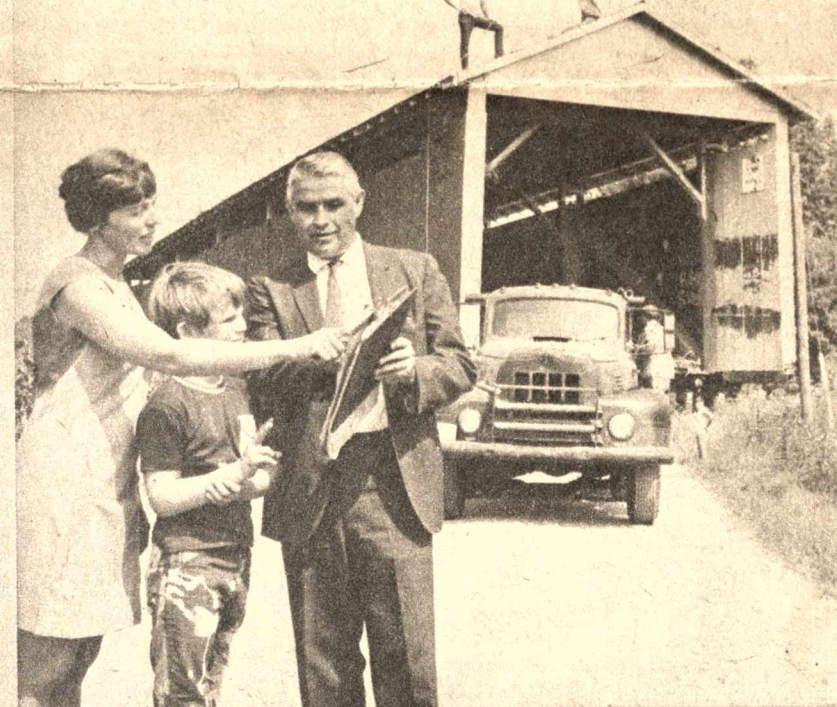
THE LAST COUPLE to cross the bridge before the move began were Mr. and Mrs. Richard Dyche, RR 24, Terre Haute.



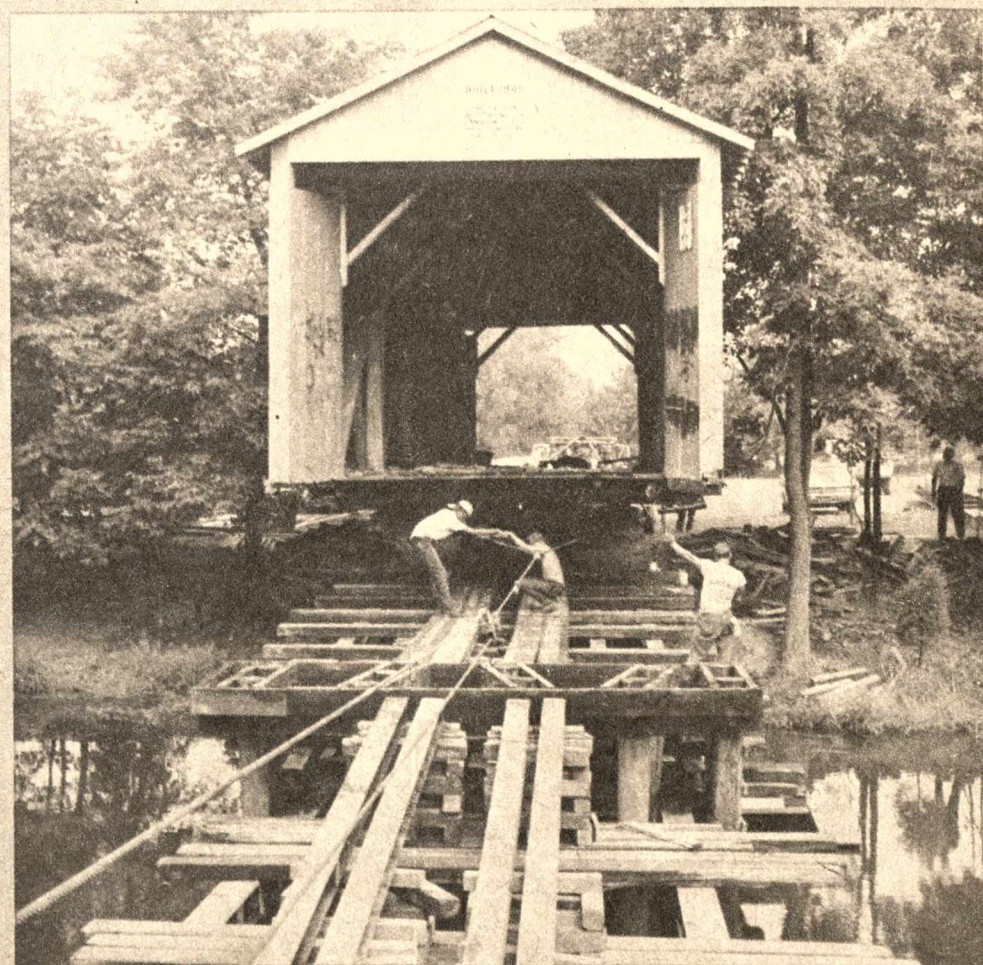
A SLIGHT PROBLEM—A young spectator makes his way down the road to see if he can help maneuver the structure around a bend in the road. Sightseers lined the roads leading to Fowler Park to watch the activity.

HELPING MOVERS were Mrs. Ewing Miller, who drew plans for the bridge's final resting > place, and Bert Lammey, who coordinated the volunteer efforts of building tradesmen and union members.

< ON ITS WAY—Irishman's Bridge was a strange sight to Vigo County motorists as it moved along county roads to its destination.



THE BRIDGE arrives at the entrance to Fowler Park.



NEARING THE END of its journey, the bridge is rolled onto its final resting place.

< IN ADVANCE, crews fixed timbers in the lake at Fowler Park to give support to the historic monument to the covered bridge era.



# King for a Day

## Your Newspaper Boy Saturday, October 16

### International Newspaper Boy Day

THROUGHOUT the United States National Newspaper Boy Day is being observed. The Terre Haute Tribune-Star proudly joins in this national salute to the boys who are so important a part of our free community way of life.

#### NEWSPAPER BOY'S CREED

"I believe in Salesmanship and Good Service; in the Newspaper I am selling; in the Firm I am associated with, and in my ability to get results.

"I believe in working, not waiting; in laughing, not weeping; in boosting, not knocking, and in the pleasure of selling newspapers.

"I believe that a man gets what he goes after; that one order today is worth two orders tomorrow, and that no man is a failure until he has lost faith in himself.

"I believe in today and the work I am doing; in tomorrow and the work I hope to do, and in the reward which the future holds.

"I believe in Courtesy, in Kindness, in Generosity, in Good Cheer, in Friendship and Honest Competition.

"I believe that the best way to help myself is by helping the other fellow."

## Your newspaper boy rates high marks on every count. Tell him so.



Your newspaperboy has a business of his own—his newspaper route.

He delivers, he collects, he keeps books, he sells.

He puts to practical use the lessons he learns in the classroom.

So he is a high achiever.

And he learns other important lessons. How to get along with people, the value of promptness and courtesy, how to earn money and use it wisely.

No other part-time enterprise we know of offers a boy such

an opportunity for personal achievement.

And the experience he gains in managing his route will continue to be valuable to him through life. Whatever field he enters, he will find management looking for achievers. Like him.

And, a message for parents: A newspaper route could help your boy in classroom and business achievement. Suggest that he telephone our circulation department and make an appointment to come in and talk with us.